

HIGHWAY BRIDGE ACROSS THE POTOMAC RIVER AT
WASHINGTON, D. C.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

TRANSMITTING,

WITH COPY OF A LETTER FROM THE ENGINEER OFFICER IN
CHARGE, A RECOMMENDATION RELATING TO THE EXTENSION
OF TIME FOR COMPLETION OF THE PROPOSED HIGHWAY
BRIDGE ACROSS THE POTOMAC RIVER AT WASHINGTON, D. C.

JANUARY 15, 1903.—Referred to the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce
and ordered to be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington, January 13, 1903.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith copy of a letter dated December 31 ultimo from Lieut. Col. Charles J. Allen, Corps of Engineers, recommending, for reasons stated, that the time for completing the highway bridge across the Potomac River, this city, be extended to February 12, 1906. At present the limit is fixed by law at February 12, 1905.

As the Chief of Engineers U. S. Army concurs in the recommendation of Colonel Allen, that it would be to the interests of the Government to extend the time for completing this structure, early and favorable consideration is requested.

Copy of draft of a joint resolution to accomplish the above-mentioned purpose is transmitted herewith.

Very respectfully,

ELIHU ROOT,
Secretary of War.

The SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE,
Washington, D. C., December 31, 1902.

GENERAL: 1. Referring to the specifications submitted with my indorsement of this date, pertaining to the construction of the proposed highway bridge across the Potomac River at Washington, section 31

of the specifications fixes the date of completion at December 1, 1904, leaving but small margin for an extension of time for completion in case an extension should become necessary.

2. In my opinion the entire time between now and February 12, 1905, fixed in the act of Congress of July 1, 1902 (District of Columbia appropriation act), for construction of this bridge is too short. The original act, that of February 12, 1901, allowed two years from that date, or until February 12, 1903, for construction of the proposed bridge. A Board of officers of the Corps of Engineers, constituted by Special Orders, No. 8, Headquarters Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army, Washington, March 22, 1901, to select a site, formulate plans, specifications, and estimates for a bridge to be built in accordance with the said act, presented a report, dated October 25, 1901, which was published as House Document No. 138, Fifty-seventh Congress, first session, in which the cost of a bridge recommended to meet the requirements was placed at \$996,000.

3. Congress, in act of July 1, 1902, appropriated the sum of \$996,000 for the structure and extended the time for building the bridge to February 12, 1905.

4. Specifications for constructing the bridge were presented by myself in October last, but certain questions as to form of truss have necessarily consumed some time since that date.

5. If we should advertise to-day for proposals for construction of the bridge in accordance with the specifications submitted this date, it would possibly be three months before a contract with bond could be executed. The work should not be advertised for less than fifty days. It would take some time to get the specifications printed and the plates lithographed. After the opening of proposals there would be the time necessarily consumed in examining the bids, in making the award, and in executing contract and bond.

6. Then there is the chance, always possible, though barely probable, of a failure to secure a good contract, thus necessitating readvertisement.

7. In my opinion the interests of the Government would be best subserved by an extension of the time to February 12, 1906, though every effort would and should be made to complete the bridge at an earlier date.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

CHAS. J. ALLEN,

Lieut. Col., Corps of Engineers

Brig. Gen. GEORGE L. GILLESPIE,

Chief of Engineers, U. S. A.

JOINT RESOLUTION providing for an extension of time for completing the highway bridge across the Potomac River at Washington, District of Columbia.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the time for completing the construction of the highway bridge across the Potomac River authorized by section twelve of the act of Congress approved February twelfth, nineteen hundred and one, entitled "An act to provide for eliminating certain grade crossings on the line of the Baltimore and Potomac Railroad Company, in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, and requiring said company to depress and elevate its tracks, and to enable it to relocate parts of its railroad therein, and for other purposes," as amended by the District of Columbia appropriation act approved July first, nineteen hundred and two, be and is hereby, extended to February twelfth, nineteen hundred and six.